54. Vikas Hybrids and Electronics Ltd.

55. Pan India Electronics Pvt. Ltd.

56. IXL.

57. Bell Canada International Ltd.

58. Telstra International Ltd.

59. Priyaraj Electronics Pvt. Ltd.

60. Karnataka State Electronics Development Corpn.

61. Stanilite Electronics Pvt. Ltd., Australia.

Protest against National Telecom Policy by Employees Union

68. SHRI VIRENDRA KATARIA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some major employees unions in the Department of Telecommunications (DOT) have strongly protested against the National Telecom policy;

(b) if so, what are the main objections of the unions against the policy; and

(c) the reaction of Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) to (c) The employees unions are now not opposing entry of private sector in the basic services and their main objections are as under:

(i) No handing over of DOT establishment in basic telephone service to private operators.

(ii) Training and retraining of staff to upgrade the skill education and to improve work culture.

(iii) Job security be assured by the Government.

The Government have assured the Unions on each of the above points that their interests would be fully protected.

Lower level of telephone capacity utilisations in Metro Cities

69. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that telephone capacity utilisation levels in metropolitan cities have been lower than the feasible levels of capacity utilisation;

(b) if so, the details thereof during the past three years and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is also a fact that increased utilisation of the equipped capacity would provide additional conections without or with much lower further investments; and

(d) if so, the details thereof, steps and results thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Details of capacity utilisation during the past three years are given below:

Percentage utilisation of equipped capacity

	Bombay	Calcutta	Delhi	Madras
1991-92	88.36	84.17	85.43	91.88
1992-93	93.06	89.24	86.37	90.01
1993-94	89.60	85.30	85.50	87.90

It is normal to increase utilisation of capacity in a phased manner to gradually reach to 90 per cent in a few month's time. When the capacity utilisation is likely to cross 90 per cent expansion of existing exchanges is usually started.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Guidelines are available in the Department of Telecommunications to ensure optimum utilisation of the equipped capacity.

Installation of bag de-dusting plants

70. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government had planned to install bag de-dusting plants, to avoid dust in mail sorting and post offices;

(b) if so, what was the targets set for the Seventh and Eight Five Year Plans separately and what are the achievements, so far;

(c) if there is shortfall in the achievement of targets, the reasons therefor, the remedial measures taken and the results thereof;

(d) the impact on the health of mail sorters and other employees of Post Offices due to non-installation of adequate number of bag-de-dusting Plants and the manner in which the affected employees have been compensated; and

(e) the responsibilities fixed for inadequate installation of such plants and action taken or proposed to be taken against them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Fifty de-dusting plants were planned for installation during the seventh Five Year Plan. In the absence of indigenous technology on Indian Company was contracted after inviting tenders for procurement and supply of three prototype samples of bag de-dusting plants and these were installed at Bombay, Bangalore and Delhi respectively. Further development of the de-dusting equipment however could not materialise because of the unsatisfactory maintenance of the three prototypes by the Company concerned which eventually gave rise to a dispute and the matter is presently subjudice.

No specific target in this regard has been set for the 8th Five Year Plan since this was to be formulated annually. For the year 1994-95 about 16 locations have been identified for setting up such equipments.

(c) As per the agreement governing procurement of these equipments, the supplier was required to, first develop prototype, carry out satisfactory maintenance of the equipment and progressively indigenous it by setting up manufacturing facility in the country, so that the Department could consider placing of bulk orders for the remaining equipments.

The shortfall during the Seventh Five Year Plan was due to the unsatisfactory performance of the prototype arising from poor maintenance support provided by the supplier. In the circumstances the Department did not place further orders for the remaining equipments planned.

Bag washing plant which regularly washes all bags used for transportation of mails have since been installed in seven locations in the country and these have been operating satisfactorily.

(d) In order to provide satisfactory work environment the Department has initiated various measures including installation of seven bag washing units in the country where bags are regularly washed. In addi-